

# IDAHO Business

Fall 2011

A photograph of three people standing on a modern staircase with a wooden railing. In the foreground, a woman with long brown hair and glasses, wearing a white lab coat over a blue patterned top, smiles and holds a small glass. Behind her, a man in a dark suit and blue tie stands with his hand on the railing. To the left, another woman with short brown hair, wearing a grey blazer over a striped shirt and light-colored pants, also smiles. The background shows a large, modern building interior with a high ceiling and large windows.

**Healthcare fuels new growth**  
**Innovation abounds in Idaho**  
**REC-TECH LURES MANUFACTURERS**

the landscape of the

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# A Message From Governor Otter



Idaho's been a well-kept secret, but the word is getting out. We're tops in innovation, our healthcare sector is growing faster than the national average, we have a dynamic renewable energy sector—and our potatoes taste pretty good too!

There's a reason Idaho continues to rank high for its economic outlook. We do more than just recruit businesses to the state. We take care of them when they're here.

Our businesses enjoy low operating costs, taking advantage of some of the nation's cheapest energy. Workforce training funds are available for qualifying businesses and my Hire One program provides a tax credit for adding qualifying new employees.

I come from the business world and understand what it takes to succeed. My commitment to keep taxes low, nurture an investment- and jobs-friendly business environment and adhere to a balanced budget has kept our state strong.

If you're thinking about expanding or moving your business, you'll want to take a look at Idaho.

**commerce.idaho.gov**

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### About the cover:

**Top left:** Dr. Elizabeth Burns-Diesing M.D.—Medical Director St. Luke's Heart Health and Rehabilitation Center.

**Top right:** Dr. J. Robert Polk, MD, MPH, is the Chief Quality Officer for the Saint Alphonsus Health System.

**Bottom:** Jo Lynne Kiester graduated from Idaho State University in May 2011 with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and is now in a year-long residency at Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center in Idaho Falls. Photographed at Idaho State University, Meridian campus by Glenn Oakley.



# Idaho is a Great Place to Live, And St. Luke's is a Big Reason Why.



**St. Luke's Health System** is dedicated to keeping Idahoans healthy through high quality medical care and innovative community prevention programs. With five full-service hospitals, five regional cancer centers, the state's only Children's Hospital, and more than 90 physician clinics and diagnostic centers, St. Luke's is nationally recognized for excellence across our health system.

All this, in Idaho's beautiful and exciting surroundings—an ideal combination of outdoor playground, lively cultural and entertainment scene, and family-friendly communities.

**St. Luke's is Idaho's largest private employer and most awarded health system, serving the region for more than 100 years as a community owned, not-for-profit provider.**

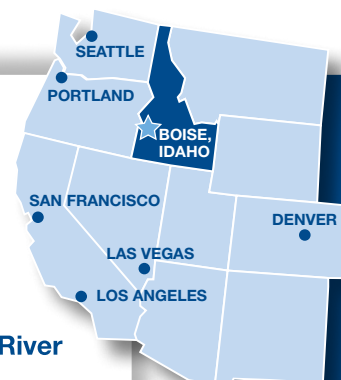
## Discover Idaho:

- 15th in the nation for cost of living and quality of life
- 17 million roadless acres – the most in the Lower 48
- Home to Sun Valley, ranked 7th Best Ski Resort in the U.S., *Ski* magazine (2009)
- Boise—Idaho's capital—is rated one of the best places to live in the U.S. by *Money* magazine, *U.S. News*, *Sunset*, and *Kiplinger*; Best Places to Live and Play by *National Geographic Adventure* magazine; and #1 Mountain Bike Town by *Bike* and *Mountain Bike* magazines.
- Twin Falls is home to St. Luke's Magic Valley, the region's newest state-of-the-art medical center designed with the latest in "green" and energy efficiency technology, opened in 2011.
- Beautiful McCall is an all-season tourist destination for outdoor recreation, famous for its Winter Carnival, stunning Payette Lake, and the highest average snowfall in Idaho.



[stlukesonline.org](http://stlukesonline.org)

Boise • Magic Valley • McCall • Meridian • Wood River





# Healthcare Growth in Idaho

## Outpaces National Trend

By Julie Howard



Dr. Joe Williams is shown with his team at Idaho Urologic Institute, an anchor tenant in The Core in Meridian.

It may not come as a surprise that healthcare is Idaho's fastest growing industry. After all, it's one of the nation's fastest growing industries as well.

The pace is expected to be even more accelerated in Idaho, because of the state's booming population trend over the past decade. Idaho grew by more than 20 percent from 2000 to 2011, with a population of more than 1.5 million mostly located in just a few urban centers.

More than 1,000 new healthcare companies

opened their doors in Idaho between 2000 and 2010, bringing the number of employers in this industry to more than 3,740. These companies employed nearly 69,000 workers with total annual wages of \$2.75 billion.

Into the near future, healthcare is expected to continue its rapid growth in Idaho, expanding operations and job opportunities around the state. The growth projections reflect the new facilities either recently completed or underway.

In every subsector, jobs in Idaho's healthcare industry are projected to grow faster than the national average. Between 2009-2014, jobs at hospitals here are expected to grow by 17 percent, compared to 7 percent nationally. Jobs at nursing and residential care facilities are expected to be up by 20 percent in Idaho compared to 11 percent nationally. The direct health and medical insurance carrier segment is projected to grow by 28 percent between 2009-2014, compared to 5 percent nationally.

The importance of the healthcare industry to the state's economy is growing.

In 2009, nearly 13 percent of all jobs in Idaho were in the healthcare field, compared to less than 10 percent a decade earlier. The sector is the second largest, in terms of jobs, after the retail industry—but the healthcare sector is estimated to have 10 times the ripple effect in the economy as the retail sector.

- St. Luke's invested nearly \$20 million for a new central laboratory and central laundry facility in Boise that opened in March.
- The hospital invested several million dollars in expansions of its cardiac cath labs in Meridian and the development of Idaho's first Cardiac Rehabilitation Center.
- More than \$100 million is being invested into a new electronic medical record system.

St. Luke's also plans to invest \$1.27 billion over the next decade in new services and facilities, promising even more growth for the state. Two projects, announced in June 2011, are the relocation of its cancer services at St. Luke's Mountain States Tumor Institute to Meridian, where a new regional cancer center will be built on the campus of the existing St. Luke's facility. In addition, a new 10-story tower will be built behind the Boise facility, primarily housing heart services and patients.



Dr. David Pate, St. Luke's president/CEO, dedicates new facility in Twin Falls



Lobby at new Portneuf Medical Center in Pocatello

St. Luke's, with five hospitals and 90 clinics, is the state's largest private employer with more than 9,000 employees. The Boise-based hospital system, through mergers and new hires, added more than 1,600 employees in 2010 alone.

St. Luke's had several expansion projects completed in 2011, including:

The Magic Valley Medical Center, a \$238 million 700,000-square-foot facility on 40 acres in Twin Falls. The state-of-the-art hospital opened in May.

"Idaho is fortunate to have a vibrant and expanding health care industry, and at St. Luke's we understand that access to high quality health care is a key driver of Idaho's economic success, and a critical component in Idaho's ability to attract new businesses and opportunity to our great state," said Dr. David Pate, St. Luke's Health System president and CEO.

St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center is also among Idaho's top 10 employers, with 3,390 workers, and also is ranked in the top 5 percent of



The Saint Alphonsus Swisslog "Pill-picker" machine barcodes, packages, stores and dispenses unit dose medication. It is the only such robot in the state of Idaho. The robot decreases human touches, reduces medication errors and greatly enhances patient safety. The system also improves tracking and minimizes waste.



Eastern Idaho Medical Center in Idaho Falls

hospitals nationwide. The hospital has the Boise region's only Level II trauma center and is a Thomson Reuters top 50 cardiovascular hospital.

The medical center spent \$10.5 million in 2010 to improve patient access to health care and maintain its quality of care. Improvements included a \$2.9 million expansion of its physician network, a \$2.1 million implementation of an electronic medical record system, \$4.6 million in improvements to equipment and facilities, and nearly \$1 million in laboratory automation technologies. The hospital also spent more than twice that



Biomedical and Pharmaceutical science student at ISU Pocatello campus

in community and charitable services—another area where hospitals benefit communities.

The future involves even more investments. St. Alphonsus will spend \$15 million implementing its electronic health record system to its hospital in Nampa as well as two of its Oregon hospitals in Ontario and Baker City. Another \$8.6 million will be spent expanding its outpatient facilities in Fruitland. It will expand the emergency department at its main campus in Boise and expand its Nampa Health Plaza.

"As elected state and municipal officials work to bring new industry to this region, and as families decide where to buy houses and build their lives, one critically important fact they take into account is access to superior quality health care,"





Pocatello's new Portneuf Medical Center

said St. Alphonsus President and CEO Sally Jeffcoat. “Knowing that your workforce, the one you have now or the one you hope to build, has access to excellent health care is a significant selling point the Saint Alphonsus Health System is proud to provide.”

Other regions around Idaho are seeing rapid growth in healthcare as well. In May 2011, a \$220 million hospital opened in Pocatello—the relocation and expansion of the Portneuf Medical Center. The expansion was the single largest construction project in the city’s history. The 300,000-square-foot medical center has 1,300 employees.

Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center in Idaho Falls finished a \$20 million expansion and renovation of its Women & Infants Center in 2011. The center has the only Level 111b Neonatal Intensive Care Unit within 180 miles of Idaho Falls.

Mountain View Hospital in Idaho Falls spent \$11 million in 2009 to double the number of in-patient rooms and expand other areas. The expansion led to a 14 percent rise in the hospital’s employment. In 2010, the hospital expanded even more, building a transitional care facility with partner Ball Ventures.

Bingham Memorial Hospital in Blackfoot

completed various construction and remodeling projects in 2010, including a sky bridge that connects the hospital to a new medical office plaza. The hospital has nearly tripled its employment to more than 600 since 2005.

Beyond hospitals, there is an even larger healthcare segment—clinics, specialists and private medical offices. This sector added more than 11,000 jobs in the past decade and is projected to grow by another 25 percent over the next decade. Nursing facilities, residential care facilities, insurance carriers and social assistance are other areas projected to grow by double digits as well.

Regence Blue Shield, with operations in four states, has made a significant commitment to Idaho. In Lewiston, it built a 57,000-square-foot building in 2006 and expanded it in 2008. The company cites its commitment to Lewiston and Idaho’s solid workforce as reasons it stays here rather than putting those resources into other locations in Oregon, Utah and Washington. In recent years, it has expanded to new locations in Twin Falls and Coeur d’Alene, as well as keeping an office in Pocatello. Regence has grown employment in Idaho from 484 in 2001 to 767 in 2010, and intends to grow its footprint in the state. ♦

# Idaho's Top Industries *Growing*

Idaho has long been home to a host of national and international companies, spanning manufacturing, agriculture, natural resources and high-tech. Among the more well-known are Micron Technology Inc., URS, Boise Cascade and JR Simplot.

Motive Power, the nation's largest locomotive manufacturer, and manufacturers of everything from jet boats to instruments for the nuclear industry, have found success in the state.

Food manufacturing has grown rapidly with a number of cheese companies taking advantage of Idaho's large dairy industry. And, of course, there are potatoes, with 30 percent of all spuds grown in the United States coming from Idaho.

The healthcare industry is booming here, with growth surging through the last decade and more projected to come. Employment and investment numbers are up significantly in this sector. Today, healthcare is the state's fastest growing industry and the pace outstrips the national rate.

The state has launched into a full portfolio of renewables, adding wind, solar and biomass to its longtime use of geothermal and hydropower. The Idaho National Laboratory and the state's colleges and universities are also very involved in research in renewable energy sectors.

The great outdoors plays a role in the "recreational technology" industry which manufactures products used in activities ranging from fly fishing to hunting to jet boating. Companies enjoy using the state's environment as an outdoor laboratory for their products.

Of course, you can't talk about Idaho without mentioning its outdoor wonders. Whitewater rafting, skiing, mountain biking, rock climbing and fly fishing draw thousands each year to the state's parks and wilderness areas. Diverse landscapes range from lava fields to forests and canyon lands to sand dunes. The tourism industry offers something for everyone in Idaho's four-season climate. ♦



In 2009 and through the first half of 2010 (the latest data available), the biggest industries in Idaho in terms of employment were:

1. Retail trade
2. Health care and social assistance
3. Manufacturing
4. Accommodation and food services
5. Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services
6. Professional, scientific and technical services
7. Construction
8. Wholesale trade
9. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
10. Finance and insurance



# WhiteCloud Puts Focus on Healthcare Industry

By Julie Howard

When Microsoft bought ProClarity, a business intelligence software firm in Boise, it seemed a fitting end for a successful startup.

It was also the beginning of WhiteCloud Analytics, a company that provides business intelligence for the healthcare industry.

ProClarity co-founder Bob Lokken stayed with Microsoft for awhile and then left with Jeff Rutherford, who had been one of his ProClarity employees and later was Microsoft's worldwide sales director for business intelligence. In 2009, three years after selling ProClarity, the two launched WhiteCloud.

"When we were at ProClarity, 40 percent of what we did was in the healthcare sector, so we have a good understanding of their problems," said Rutherford. "We knew we wanted to focus on a vertical industry, and this seemed to be an industry in great need of a solution."

The problem WhiteCloud addresses is that hospitals need to manage and utilize large amounts of data. But sifting through the data and working with individual clients to understand what performance standards they need to report on can be challenging.

Hospitals have "way too much data to get their arms around and understand," said Rutherford. "It also happens to be siloed in many places. We work aggressively to reduce the amount of data they work with so they can work quicker to determine their outcomes."

The analytics helps organizations make informed decisions about where to focus performance improvement efforts or to determine which physicians, service lines, units, groups, etc., require immediate attention. In the end, good analytics can lead to better clinical, operational and financial outcomes.

Understanding business analytics and what large organizations need most is an advantage WhiteCloud offers.

"(Our competitors) seem to focus on collecting the data and presenting as much of it as they can to decision makers," said Rutherford. In



Jeff Rutherford, co-founder of WhiteCloud, checks in with an employee

contrast, WhiteCloud differentiates itself by selecting the metrics most important to a health-care system's goals and presenting the data in a meaningful format.

In Idaho, WhiteCloud has a strategic partnership with St. Luke's Health System, the state's largest hospital network. The company is working with two other health systems in New York, one in Tennessee and one in Florida, as well as others on a more interim basis.

"I think Boise is an excellent place to launch a company," said Rutherford. "We are located in the downtown core and we love the city. There seems to be a lot of good sales and marketing talent here." ♦



# Health-Science Research Corridor

## Heats up in Meridian

By Scott Peyron

**M**eridian Mayor Tammy de Weerd couldn't be more pleased with the direction her growing city is taking.

Money Magazine recognized Meridian, Idaho's third-largest city, among its Best Places to Live.

It was named one of the country's 100 Best Communities for Young People by America's Promise Alliance and ING.

And business development has heated up in a big way, especially in an area designated as The Core. The 3-mile corridor along I-84 through Meridian contains major healthcare providers, a university, research organizations and technology firms. Encompassing more than 1,800 acres, more than 40 businesses have located there in the past few years.

"The Core is a vital element of Meridian's business plan, empowering the assets of higher education, research and economic development in an effort that will help transform the Idaho economy," said de Weerd. "Working together we are building a health science research corridor with services and manufacturers that rival any corridor in the northwest."

A public-private leadership board works to focus marketing efforts for The Core and recruit new businesses to the region. Working in unison means the group of businesses and organizations have similar goals for their region and can market strengths together. One project currently underway leverages the resources of The Core to develop a modernized system for the delivery of healthcare in Chengdu, China.

"It is an honor to have this opportunity to share lessons from the alignment of research, business, advanced education and healthcare with leaders of one of the fastest growing economies of the 21st century," said Earl Sullivan, chairman of The CORE, who gained deep experience in working in China as chief executive of a pharmaceutical manufacturer. "What is developing rapidly at The CORE can become one model of how healthcare could evolve in all developed countries."

Some of the organizations and companies in The Core are:



**Idaho State University** ([www.isu.edu](http://www.isu.edu)), nationally recognized for its healthcare and pharmacy curriculum, has opened its multimillion-dollar Meridian Health Science Center in the same complex that houses the Meridian School District's cutting-edge magnet high school, where students seeking careers in health care and technology attend.



**St. Luke's Meridian Medical Center** ([www.stluke-online.org/meridian](http://www.stluke-online.org/meridian)) recorded more than 320,000 patient visits at the hospital and its associated clinics in 2010. St. Luke's Meridian is part of St. Luke's Health System, Idaho's largest and only locally controlled health care system

with five hospitals across central and southern Idaho. Over the next decade, St. Luke's Health System plans to invest \$1.27 billion in new facilities and services across its service area with a goal of establishing St. Luke's Health System as a nationally-renowned health care provider.



In Pinebridge Med-Tech Business Park, fast-track construction is underway on a new headquar-

ters manufacturing complex for PKG User Interface Solutions ([www.pkguis.com](http://www.pkguis.com)). PKG has grown into a major player in the health care diagnostic field with its innovative processes to design, develop, and manufacture integrated ultrasound and other medical devices for some of the leading brands in the business. Now, Meridian-based PKG is making a big move into avionics. The company has been selected to be part of the avionics team to develop and manufacture user interface control systems for Airbus' next generation super airliner—the A350.

**MWI Veterinary Supply** ([www.mwivet.com](http://www.mwivet.com)) is one of the country's largest suppliers of animal health products to licensed veterinarians. The company sells products for animals ranging from small pets to cattle.

**Conex Med Pro Systems** ([www.conexmps.com](http://www.conexmps.com)) is a maker of a telemedicine system that facilitates clinical collaboration and education through a common set of tools designed for clinicians and patients. ♦

More information on The Core is at [www.thecoreidaho.com/content/core-and-city-meridian](http://www.thecoreidaho.com/content/core-and-city-meridian).



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# Tech sector diversifies, growth continues

By Julie Howard

Think the last decade turned the tech industry upside down in Idaho? Think again.

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of high-tech companies in Idaho grew by 61 percent. And despite the tech crash early in the decade and the recession late in the decade, the number of high tech companies in the state grew every year. In 2010, the Department of Labor reported there were more than 48,000 people employed in Idaho's tech sector, earning annual wages of more than \$3.4 billion.

The state's largest industry has diversified over the last decade, with more companies in a variety of sectors—from software and semiconductors to online services and nanomaterials. New businesses here are a mix of home-grown and newcomers to the region.

Synoptek CEO Tim Britt moved the bulk of his multi-state technology services firm from Orange County, California to Boise in 2008 after buying out a local firm. He had found that it was becoming more and more difficult to recruit top-level employees to the expensive and crowded southern California market.

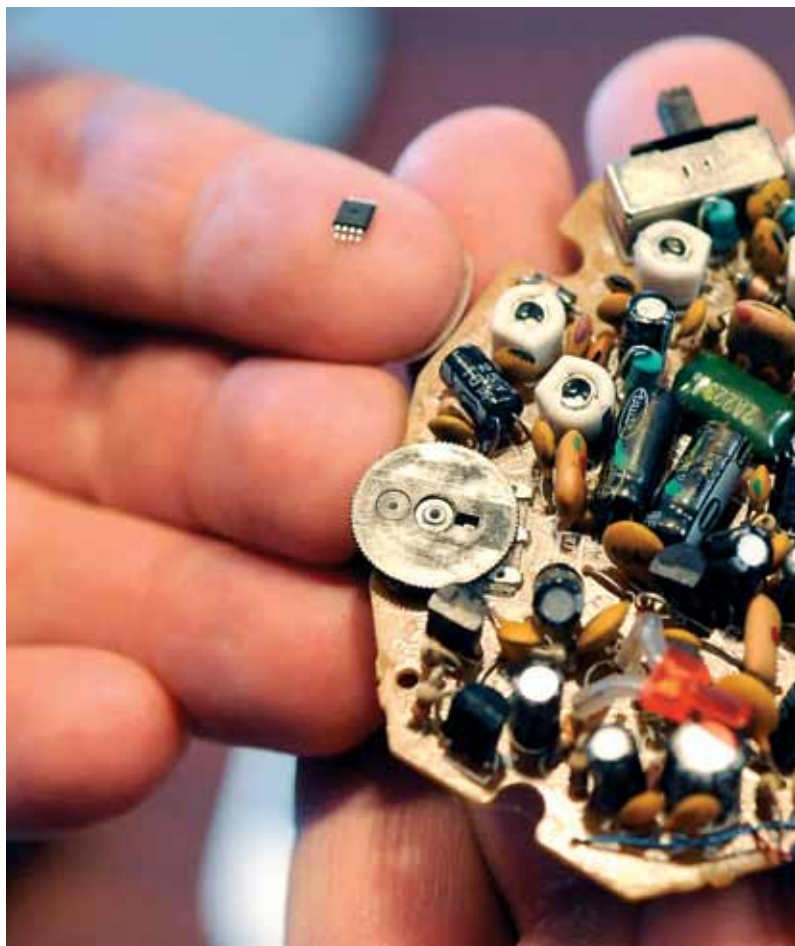
"Technology changes over every five years or so and we need to be bringing in professionals with the latest knowledge and who understand the latest trends," said Britt. "If we can't bring them in, then we have problems."

Solution? Boise, Idaho.

"We were looking for a place with a better overall work-life proposition for workers and enough of a technology base to incubate new skills," he said.

Since moving to Boise, the company has more than doubled in size and nine employees from Orange County have since made the move too. Britt finds the Idaho talent pool to work well for his company.

"We've found that culturally, Idaho is a place that breeds independent thinking. That makes our team more resourceful and better problem-solvers."



ON Semiconductor, located in Pocatello, designs and supplies electronics for a host of industries.

Idaho's top technology companies are Micron Technology, ON Semiconductor, Keynetics, Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard and Premier Technology. The state also is home to the Idaho National Laboratory, a Department of Energy facility that focuses on new nuclear technologies and also an array of technologies that include alternative energy, robotics and batteries.

The INL and the state's universities have tech transfer programs that have begun to spin off new companies that use new technologies. GoNano, in Moscow, Idaho, was born in 2007 from collaborative research done between University of Idaho and Washington State University. The two universities sit a few miles from each other on the border of the state lines, creating a region that is filled with PhDs and entrepreneurial aspirations.

GoNano—with eight full time employees, two consultants and an intern—develops and manufactures high surface area nanomaterials for pollution control, catalysis, composites and sensory technologies. The technology in mid-2011 attracted investment from the giant firm 3M through its New Ventures Business division.





Aziz Makhani



Tim Britt

Aziz Makhani, director of marketing and sales for GoNano, said the research activities at Idaho universities and the Idaho National Laboratory, provide opportunities for new innovative companies to grow and prosper.

Makhani adds that the state takes growing its existing companies seriously.

"The local and state level governments are very supportive of new technology startups in advocating and helping to promote in different countries where the Department of Commerce has foreign trade offices," said Makhani.

Recognizing that commercializing technologies from public research institutions could reap big benefits for the state's economy, Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter established the Idaho Innovation Council in 2009. The Council, made up of public and private leaders, is charged with recommending standards for a statewide tech transfer process and implementing a statewide innovation plan.

"This is an important component of Idaho's economy. No matter what industry you're talking about, applying technology means adding value and adding jobs," said Mark Warbis, who represents the Governor's Office on the Council's board. "Coordinating efforts among state and federal research organizations and private industry will enable more efficient tech transfer, more effective movement of ideas into new and innovative products and services, and a more prosperous future for Idaho."

Doug Sayer, who chairs the Idaho Innovation Council and is president of Premier Technology, says the state has several attributes that make it a good place for technology firms.

"Idaho is a very business friendly state, with skilled labor, a strong work ethic and a highly trainable resource pool to draw from," said Sayer. "The low cost of living, family friendly communities and a high quality of life also make the state very attractive to businesses."

Sayer's own company has seen significant growth in the clean energy sector, supporting commercial nuclear, solar and other technologies. He believes Idaho has



Hewlett-Packard is one of Idaho's top technology companies



Idaho State University's Accelerator Center

its largest opportunities in clean energy technologies and domestic manufacturing.

"Outsourcing overseas is a national trend and Idaho offers on shore high tech manufacturing opportunities," he said. "The strong business friendly universities coupled with the Idaho

National Laboratory, makes Idaho very competitive in the clean energy sector—transitioning new technologies to market-ready production."

A private organization—the Idaho Technology Council—also emerged in recent years to foster technology growth and provide the industry with a unified voice in the state. The organization focuses on information technology, agriscience and energy.

The Council's board is represented by some of the state's largest companies, including Micron Technology, Hewlett-Packard and J.R. Simplot Co.; several startups such as Whitecloud Analytics and Baliho; and financing firms such as Highway 12 Ventures. ♦

IMAGE: BELINDA ISLEY



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## We Make Growing Easy In Pocatello, Idaho.

And did we mention that Forbes has named Pocatello, Idaho the Best Small Place for Business 5 years in a row, and we're one of the top 10 small places to raise a family.

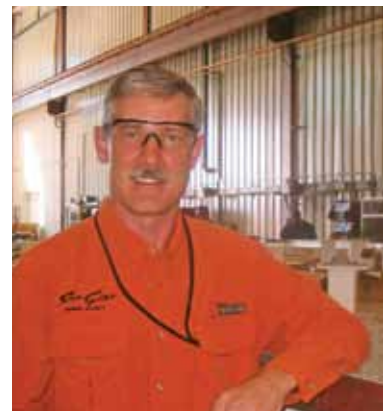
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Doug Sayer

## Premier Leverages Growth in Energy Infrastructure

By Mark Mendiola

Idaho's business-conducive environment and bountiful crop of industrious, skilled workers are crucial factors that have helped enable Blackfoot-based Premier Technology Inc. to weather the nation's stubborn economic downturn.

Since 1996, Premier Technology has combined science, engineering and technology to custom manufacture sophisticated equipment for the food processing, commercial nuclear, mining, petrochemical and construction industries, as well as for the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Defense and Homeland Security.

With 1,200 suppliers, Premier has grown to about 400 employees and \$100 million in sales, making it one of Eastern Idaho's largest employers.

Since January 2007, it has operated out of large, modern headquarters near the Idaho National Laboratory and centrally between Eastern Idaho's largest population centers.

"Within a year, one-third of our employees lived in Blackfoot, one-third in Idaho Falls and one-third in Pocatello. It's an interesting ratio," says Doug Sayer, Premier's president and chief executive officer who recently was appointed by Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter to chair the Idaho Innovation Council.

Sayer says he believes while Idaho is at a crossroads, it is better poised than most states to recover and emerge from what has been a prolonged depressed economy impacting a broad range of markets. "I'm happy Idaho has a balanced budget. We'll see rewards from that."

In mid-2011, it was announced that Idaho State University will convert the vacant Ballard

medical building in Pocatello into a science research park not far from the Idaho Accelerator Center. Sayer predicts this will create a nucleus of experts in the valley and draw nationwide attention, continuing a nuclear renaissance.

Premier Technology has fabricated a large part of the piping, vessels and other high technology equipment for the \$580 million Integrated Waste Treatment Unit under construction at the INL, as well as casks and canisters used in the shipment of nuclear waste.

A large percentage of Premier's profit is plowed back into research and development. The corporation itself is vertically integrated with an extensive in-house training program and numerous other departments designed to capitalize on opportunities in many sectors as they develop.

Sayer says he is convinced the need for manufacturing and construction will continue to grow as the nation's aging infrastructure deteriorates and energy demands escalate. He notes the United States has not constructed a new petrochemical refinery since the late 1970s. "Energy is a matter of national security."

The United States continues to have the advantage over other nations of possessing the ability to innovate and the courage to attempt novel approaches, initiatives and solutions, notes Sayer—and says the Gem State is no exception.

"Idaho is small enough we can actually band together and work with Idaho companies, leveraging each other," Sayer says. ♦



# E-commerce Firm

## Grows Rapidly, Quietly in Boise

By Julie Howard

Idaho's largest privately held technology business is mostly unknown even to Idahoans. With just 120 employees, the e-commerce company has revenues of more than \$400 million annually.

ClickBank can best be described as an Amazon.com for self-publishers, although some hard goods are sold through the e-commerce site. One user of ClickBank was a teenage boy who wrote an ebook on how to play, and win, at the game of World of Warcraft. The book produced more than \$800,000 of revenue, and the boy went on to sell several other of his books.

Another successful user was a woman who wrote a 40-page e-book on how to attract hummingbirds to one's backyard. That e-book produced about \$750,000 in revenue.

"We don't have just one or two vendors that provide most of the sales," said Steve Rouse, chief operating officer. "The revenue is very well distributed."

However, in addition to providing a sales platform, ClickBank also has a marketing component. This facet of the business unleashes a citizen marketing force that is rewarded each time a product is sold. ClickBank makes a sale somewhere in the world every three seconds and is ranked as one of the most highly-trafficked sites on the web.

ClickBank is one of two subsidiaries operated by the holding company Keynetics, based in Boise. The other subsidiary, Kount, is a fraud protection service for ecommerce payment transactions. When a company or bank requests authorization and a fraud score for a transaction, Kount provides it in real time, as the payment is being processed. The customer quickly receives notification whether the transaction is likely to be fraudulent.

The technology was initially developed to protect transactions taking place on ClickBank. Holding company Keynetics sold some of the



Keynetics Chief Operating Officer Steve Rouse

technology to FirstData and agreed to a non-compete clause for seven years. When the noncompete expired in 2008, Keynetics formed Kount around the technology.

Kount's customers include Chase Paymentech, which processes more than half of the internet transactions in the world, said Rouse. Other customers include companies like Staples, Crate & Barrel, Crocs, Allstate and Virgin Mobile.

The company was originally started in San Diego, Calif. in 1998 and moved to Boise in 2000 after founders looked for a more cost effective place to build a business. Rouse says Idaho's business environment has been good for the company; in fact, ClickBank's revenues grew by double digits in 2010.

"A lot of our success has to do with the type of people we have in our company. One of the great things about Boise is it's pretty easy to attract talent," said Rouse. "We're constantly scouring the valley for people, but if we have to go outside to, say, the Bay Area, it's easy to attract people to Boise because it's such a good place to live." ♦

# The Western Treasure Valley is OPEN for BUSINESS!

In the early 2000's, **Nunhems USA, Inc.**, a global vegetable seed company, was looking at expanding their operations. After researching their options, they decided in 2003 to move their U.S. headquarters from Morgan Hill, California, to Idaho. At that time they had a 30 acre site located between Parma and Fruitland, Idaho that also housed one of their seed production and seed cleaning facilities.

According to Ron Amarel, Managing Director of Global Operations, "It was a big decision to pick up and move to Idaho, but bringing our main office together with the seed facility and being in the heart of the Treasure Valley - A key vegetable seed producing area - made sense." After considering the advantages of this region, the decision to relocate was finalized.



What made the **Western Treasure Valley** a good fit for Nunhems? Amarel listed several reasons:

- Experienced grower base
- Long growing season
- Semi-arid climate with consistent water supply
- Winter freeze to control insect populations
- Low plant disease pressure
- Diversified crops that allow premium crop rotation
- Strong state agencies that support partners with industry
- A good place to raise a family
- Availability of a skilled workforce
- Local government that supports business



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# Farming, Ranching Backbone Industry

## Yes, Idaho is Tops in Potatoes, but also Trout, Winter Peas

By Mark Mendiola

Idaho is best known for its famous potatoes, particularly Russet Burbanks, producing 30 percent of all spuds grown in the United States. However, the state also ranks tops in the nation for a number of other farm commodities and boasts a reputation as a leading livestock and milk producer.

Rich soil, clean air, relatively temperate climate, abundance of water and modern transportation network combine to create an environment conducive to widespread farming and ranching.

Sugar beets, wheat, beans, corn, onions, barley, hops, alfalfa hay and a host of other crops also combine with cattle and sheep to generate nearly \$6 billion in annual cash receipts for the state, making agriculture a dominant sector of Idaho's economy and a continuing important source of employment and tax revenue.

Gary Judge, 59, both farms and ranches in the Pingree area southwest of Blackfoot in Bingham County, raising cattle, about 100 acres of malt barley and 100 acres of hay. A third generation farmer/rancher, Judge sees advantages to running his agriculture operation in Idaho at a time when his counterparts are struggling to survive nationwide.

"With cattle, you're getting an advantage of getting out to the mountains and away from home. You're able to use some public lands and grazing. Idaho has so much public land," Judge says.

Idaho's weather also makes it better to raise crops and livestock than other regions of the nation where adverse conditions can wreak havoc with growing conditions and



harvests. The Aberdeen Springfield Canal Co., one of the state's largest irrigation systems, provides Judge with the water he needs for his barley and hay.

"We can kind of control the moisture for our crops. At the same time, have some

extra money to irrigate. We don't always have to depend on rain. We can always add water provided we get enough moisture in the winter so the reservoirs are full," Judge says.

Idaho ranks third in the nation for total cheese production and third in milk production. The dairy industry in recent years especially has surged in the Magic Valley near Twin Falls. It even surpasses Idaho's livestock and potato industries in dollar volume.

Idaho's wool production ranks eighth in the nation. Its number of sheep and lambs totals ninth, and its cattle and calf totals amount to



IMAGES: JAKE PUTNAM





Brian Devaney drives in cattle at Shingle Creek west of Riggins

14th. Perhaps not as well known is that the state's food-size trout industry is number one in the United States.

In addition to potatoes and trout, Idaho also ranks first for its Austrian winter peas; second for its wrinkled seed peas, barley and sugar beets; and third for its mint, hops and alfalfa hay. Other top crops include lentils, prunes and plums, onions, and dry edible peas.

Idaho's 2010 net farm income was an estimated \$1.44 billion, 55 percent higher than in 2009. Of the state's top five agricultural products, milk, beef and wheat recorded higher cash receipts in 2010, with cash receipts for milk climbing \$520 million to nearly \$2 billion. Dry beans and onions also reaped big gains in cash receipts.

Celia Gould, director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, says agriculture typically does not experience large swings as do other economic sectors. "This is really the backbone of the economy in Idaho. It also gives us needed stability," she says.

Gould estimates there are about 185 different commodities raised in Idaho. Ag producers can take raw products and add value all the way to either tables in restaurants or tables in someone's dining room, she observes.

"The potato industry is vital to Idaho not only from an economic standpoint, but for our identity as well. We are known worldwide for our potatoes. We can parlay that into a good reputation for our other commodities," she says, noting Idaho's wine industry also is achieving a positive reputation.

Idaho's stable tax environment, friendly business structure and appreciation of natural resource industries make farming and ranching in the state more profitable. Farmers and ranchers must be good stewards of the land and water to stay in business, she emphasizes.

"I just continue to be impressed by Idaho agriculture and the tenacity and hard work ethics of Idaho farmers and ranchers. They take very seriously their mission of not only feeding Idahoans, but also feeding the world," Gould says. ♦



**Mark Mendiola** has been an Eastern Idaho journalist for more than 30 years, primarily covering business and economic issues. In addition to working in communications for AMI Semiconductor Inc. and CH2M-WG Idaho, Mendiola has hosted and produced "Business Dynamics," an interview program on Vision 12, Pocatello's cable access television station, since December 2000.

# Cheese production

## Puts Gem State on National and World Map By Lisa Buddecke

Idaho is famous for producing some of the best cheeses in the nation and in the world.

Cheese production is a major and growing industry sector in Idaho, largely focused in the south central region of the state known as the Magic Valley.

Idaho produces 34 million pounds of milk per day thanks to over 550,000 cows with 75 percent of that production coming out of the Magic Valley alone. This massive supply of milk—ranking Idaho third in the country in 2010 for milk production—is purchased by numerous cheese manufacturers to produce almost 832 million pounds of cheese annually. That ranks Idaho third nationally for total cheese production.

Cheese production in this region translates into big economic numbers as well. According to Idaho Department of Labor regional economist Jan Roeser, for every one job created in this industry, another 6.72 are created.

“That’s a huge multiplier because while products are produced in this region, they are exported domestically and internationally, bringing external money into the region,” she explained.

Cheese processors thrive in this area. Glanbia Foods in Twin Falls is the world’s largest producer of American-style cheddar cheese and the largest cheese manufacturer in the Northwest. The company has two southern Idaho cheese plants that generate a staggering 1.1 million pounds of cheese every day.

Idaho offers significant advantages to processors here that puts the state in top rankings for cheese production: high milk production level and low population level. That means only a small portion of milk goes directly to consumers, leaving millions of pounds of liquid milk available to make cheese.

“Southern Idaho is the ideal location for cheese production for many reasons,” said Jeff Williams, president and CEO of Glanbia Foods. “Thanks to the area’s fairly dry, mild climate, and dependable crop irrigation, there is an abundance of quality cattle feed allowing dairy farmers to offer us a competitively-priced, high quality milk supply,” he said. “Idaho is also number one in the country for per capita milk production due to the state’s small population. Combined, these factors make for a profit-



A barrel of cheese at Glanbia Foods

able and successful cheese-processing business as we’ve enjoyed in southern Idaho for the past 20 years.”

Other regional cheese processors: Sorrento Cheese Lactalis in Nampa specializes in Mozzarella; Jerome Cheese produces Cheddar, Monterey Jack, Colby and reduced fat varieties; Brewster Cheese in Rupert specializes in Swiss Cheese; and Gossner Foods in Heyburn produces Swiss Cheese and 30 other varieties.

International demand for Idaho cheese has increased substantially as historic suppliers change their product line. New Zealand and Australia have primarily supplied Far East and Asian customers with cheese. But as they move from cheese production to powder milk products, Idaho processors are taking advantage of filling this cheese supply deficit.

“Demand for cheese in the Far East, Middle East, Asia, European Union, North Africa and Mexico is growing as they seek new sources for their supply,” Williams said. “Idaho cheese is





Marathon, the cheese packaging plant located in Mountain Home

attractive to these markets because our products are of high quality, fairly priced and very consistent year round.”

Idaho’s dairy feed lot system offers significant advantages over the grass feed systems like those in other countries. Year-round consistency in milk production is a primary advantage over seasonal-based grazing systems.

Not only does Idaho offer significant volume and consistency of cheese, the quality of the products has been confirmed time and again on the U.S. and international stage.

In 2011, Glanbia brought home a record-breaking 11 awards for making some of the best cheeses in America, winning from over 1,600 entries representing 30 states while Sorrento

Lactalis won Best in Class for Mozzarella and Jerome Cheese took third place for Shredded Whole Milk Mozzarella/Provolone Blend.

Glanbia also won 11 awards in 2010 for making some of the best cheeses in the world competing against 2,300 entries from 20 nations. ♦



**Lisa Buddecke** has been a public relations/marketing consultant for 19 years after working on both the agency and corporate side while a Southern California resident. She received a bachelor of arts degree in Journalism/Public Relations from the University of Southern California, and now lives in Twin Falls.

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## IDAHO BUSINESS REVIEW

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# Potatoes Still Rule in IDAHO

By Jake Putnam



An army of spud-diggers harvest Russet Burbank potatoes on the Mark Mickelsen farm in Osgood, Idaho.

The farm families of the Russet Burbank potato are fierce competitors, at times fight like brothers and sisters, but they're part of a proud farming brotherhood.

The Russet Burbank potato is the industry's signature brand and the brown-skinned, white-fleshed spud is used in everything from french fries and potato chips to making a statement on the dinner plate at high-end restaurants nationwide.

Bryan Searle of Shelly has farmed the famed Russets all his life and says the Snake River Plain offers the greatest spot on earth to grow spuds.

The secret he says is the dirt.

"First off you need the volcanic soil, but that's only a piece of the puzzle. Then it's the weather—we don't have the heat (that other places have). We also need the sandy soil from the Snake River Plain along with the right amount of irrigation water and the long, cool nights," said Searle.

The families of the Russet are busy during growing season nurturing the plants with healthy doses of water and chemicals to keep disease at bay. The small plants also need fertilizer to help them grow and there are always threats.

"Potatoes don't like competition. An outbreak of weeds sets a crop back," added Searle.

Overall, Idaho farmers produce more than 13 billion pounds of potatoes each year, a third of the nation's supply. According to USDA statistics, Idaho farmers produce more potatoes per acre

than anywhere on earth, last year more than 411 hundredweight per acre.

Come harvest time in Osgood, just north of Shelly, you'll find the Mickelsens, another Russet Burbank producing family. The days are dusty, hot and frantic. Trucks rush to and from fields while diggers rout the spuds from the dark soil at a steady pace. Mark Mickelsen's army of spud diggers can scoop up 36 rows at a time.

Mickelsen equips his diggers with powerful spotlights and crews work around the clock.

"During harvest we light up the night time sky," said wife Stephanie Mickelsen. For the farm families time is money—the faster they move, the more money they make, reducing fuel and labor costs.

Next door, young farmer Greg Risenmay works his 1,500 acres at break-neck speed. He drives the digger while wife, Leslie, drives the spud truck.

"We always want to harvest while we can, and everyone pitches in during the long days," he said. Forget the big corporate farm image, Idaho farm families are the driving force behind the state's largest cash crop. ♦



**Jake Putnam** is an Emmy award winning producer, reporter and photographer. He grew up on a farm outside of Pocatello, and is a nationally ranked tennis player. He currently works for Farm Bureau in Boise.

IMAGE: JAKE PUTNAM

# Nunhems Innovates New Seed Varieties

By Julie Howard



Ron Amarel, managing director of operations

If you appreciate the seedless watermelon and multi-colored carrots, get ready for a fleshier tomato.

That's the next innovation coming from Nunhems USA.

The seed company's U.S. headquarters, based in Parma, calls it the "intense tomato"—that has less juice and more flesh in the interior. Creating healthier and more appealing fruits and vegetables is what this large multi-national firm has been doing for nearly 40 years.

"We are growing in sales by 8 to 10 percent a year," said Stacey Woodruff, Nunhems' global head of processing.

That growth, in part, is led by the company's innovation in products such as seedless watermelon, colored carrots and fleshier tomatoes. Another Nunhems product on the way is melons with thinner rinds, thus providing more usable fruit inside.

Nunhems grows 28 crops, from artichokes and asparagus to okra and onions, and sells seeds and seedlings to large growers. Among those 28 crops, more than 2,500 varieties are produced, with many flowing through the Parma facility for processing.

Processing means, in part, providing quality control checks and coating seeds with pesticides

and fertilizers. The coating means that growers often don't have to spray their crops for pest control, eliminating waste and protecting the environment.

Nunhems is a subsidiary of Bayer Crop Science, which is based in The Netherlands. While the company has long had a seed processing facility in Parma—focusing strongly on onions and carrots—it moved its U.S. headquarters from Morgan Hill, Calif. to the Parma site in 2003.

"We looked at various possibilities in the states and once we looked at what Idaho could bring, this is where we settled," said Ron Amarel, managing director of operations for Nunhems USA. "We've been able to grow here and meet our needs as far as adding employees. It's a business friendly state and it's a nice place to live as well."

The company has made significant investments in the Parma facility—and in the rural community where it resides.

In 2010, the company opened the first part of a \$30 million expansion of the Parma facility. The expansion adds to the facility's seed processing capabilities and plans for future new and remodeled buildings.

One unique feature to the expansion was building a new Parma fire station, complete with an office for the county's Sheriff's Department, on the company's property. Nunhems also helped pay for a new community fire truck, which sports the company's logo on its side and has 120,000 gallon water tanks on the site that can be used by the station.

"We plan to be here for a long time and we want to be a good community partner," said Amarel. ♦



# Recreation manufacturers

## Find a Natural Fit in Idaho

By Julie Howard



Lucky Burns Ski Trainer, designed and manufactured in Boise

Idaho is a place where people clearly can enjoy the great outdoors.

Businesses have also taken notice of the state's natural assets, using rivers and mountains as natural testing facilities for their products. Idaho is home to a number of outdoor products manufacturers that find a low cost of doing business contributes to their bottom line.

The outdoor recreation industry in Idaho produces about \$2.2 billion a year in retail sales and services. The industry—dubbed “rec-tech,” which stands for recreation technology—includes everything from boats and firearms to fishing rods, ski clothing and knives.

Idaho's rec-tech industry grew 70 percent over the past decade, from 232 businesses in 2000 to 395 in 2010. The industry also added nearly

1,000 employees over that time period, according to the Idaho Department of Labor. Wages grew from \$113.7 million to \$184.9 million.

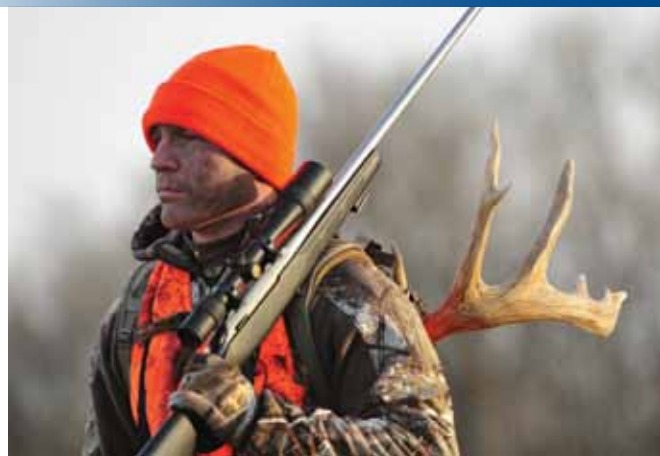
Rec-Tech as an industry works well in a state with so much rural landscape and many smaller communities. In fact, 70 percent of rec-tech companies are located in Idaho's smaller cities.

Idaho has long been known for its outdoors culture, with easy access to hunting, fishing and mountain biking. Sun Valley Ski Resort is famous around the world for its challenging runs and celebrity residents. The ski lift was invented in Sun Valley and several ski goggle firms are now based in that area. Similarly, boating enthusiasts flock to Lewiston, which sits at the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater rivers. A number of boat manufacturers have grown up in that region.





Quest Aircraft landing in Haiti.



Lewiston's ATK plant manufactures a variety of hunting bullets for those who reload their own ammunition.

An industry sector that has grown quietly is firearms and accessories, both for recreation and law enforcement use. ATK, the world's largest manufacturer of ammunition, has a large plant in Lewiston and a smaller subsidiary in Meridian.

The number of aeronautics companies in Idaho has grown steadily over the past decade, from 55 in 2001 to 92 today. Aircraft and aeronautics parts sales from these companies grew at a rapid pace in 2010. The entire segment grew from \$13.7 million to nearly \$308 million year over year.

In Grangeville a company called Idaho Sewing for Sports is doing a booming business. The company makes protective gear and training suits for law enforcement officers. In 2002, for the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake, the company produced all the padding for the speed-skating tracks.

Sewing for Sports also makes chairlift seat covers for ski resorts and expects to quadruple business in 2011.

In Boise, Lucky Bums, a startup firm that makes outdoor gear for children has been steadily growing. Lucky Bums expects to double its

sales and profits in 2011 and has been hiring new employees, with more hiring anticipated in 2012. The company's products—which range from skis to sleeping bags and even kid-sized fishing gaiters—are sold in major stores such as REI, Sports Authority, Cabela's and Eddie Bauer.

Jeff Streeter, CEO and founder of Lucky Bums, said Idaho's lifestyle meshes well with his company's culture. Streeter came up with the idea for Lucky Bums after a day of skiing with his young children left him frustrated at the lack of appropriate outdoor gear for kids.

"The lifestyle here is the best in the world," says Streeter, who launched Lucky Bums after a career as an engineer. "Ski, hike, camp, hunt, fish, raft—we can do it all. In addition, Boise is a great community to raise kids and live an amazing life." ♦



Lucky Bums specializes in outdoor equipment for kids

"For a manufacturer like ATK with products in the outdoor recreation space, Idaho is an ideal location," said Martin Zacha, ammunition general manager for ATK's Security and Sporting Group. "The town of Lewiston frequently ranks in the top 10 for hunting and outdoor recreation among industry publications."

ATK has approximately 1,100 employees at its Lewiston facility, making it one of the region's largest employers.

In Sandpoint, Quest Aircraft has found a niche making its small, rugged aircraft that is used for everything from humanitarian missions to charter services to work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In early 2011, the company received a significant investment from private investors that will help the company ramp up production and invest in its customer service centers.

# Firearms Manufacturers

## Find Welcoming Culture in Idaho

By Jake Putnam

At the confluence of Idaho's greatest rivers, a cluster of firearms companies have set up shop.

The biggest of these companies is ATK, one of the world's largest ammunition manufacturers. The facility in Lewiston has more than 1,000 employees and thrives because of a motivated workforce that understands outdoor technology.

Firearms companies are finding that Idaho is a great fit for them, in part, because the culture of the West means many potential employees are comfortable with the products, having grown up with a lifestyle of hunting and recreational target shooting.

In addition, Idaho laws offer some of the best protections in the country for firearms and ammunition manufacturers, shielding them from unnecessary lawsuits, liabilities and regulations. (See [www.commerce.idaho.gov/business/key-industries/recreational-technology/](http://www.commerce.idaho.gov/business/key-industries/recreational-technology/))

Lewiston is one of two sites where ATK, a Minneapolis-area-based aerospace and defense company, makes ammunition for the commercial and law enforcement sectors.

"They have great corporate vision," says Lewiston City Councilwoman Thyra Stevenson.

She says companies like ATK encourages excellence and community involvement by employees.

"They see the value of Lewiston, but also they're here because of the hunting and fishing and employees that share their vision," Stevenson said.

In manufacturing, motivated workers means production. ATK will produce more ammunition this year than any other single year.

"It's a very important economic engine for this area," said Stevenson. "The rec-tech companies can see that, they want to locate where they can recreate, but also be appreciated."

Also in Lewiston is Extreme Bullet, which is expanding into two buildings near the city's airport. One building will house the company's



bullet-making operation, while in the other, the company will disassemble bullets from big ammunition factories that don't meet specifications. Other nearby companies in this sector include Howell Machine Inc., which makes parts for large-scale manufacturers like ATK, and Ammo Load Worldwide Inc., which makes manufacturing equipment for small-to mid-size manufacturers.

Lewiston is also appropriately the home of the Jack O'Connor Hunting Heritage and Education Center, honoring one of the country's most famed outdoor writers.

There are firearms companies around the state, ranging widely in size. Mt. Idaho Machine in Mountain Home is a small shop that does gun machining and gun smithing. Blackhawk Products, with sites nationwide, makes products for the military and law enforcement sectors and has a large facility in Meridian.

Nightforce Optics out of Orofino won a \$25 million contract from the U.S. Department of Defense for its rifle scopes last year. The company, whose scopes are used by Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps snipers, finds that operating out of a small town is perfect for intense testing of its products.

Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter says companies that manufacture outdoors products need to take a look at the Gem State.

"When I reached out to employers in our neighboring states that raised taxes earlier this year—I invited them to move to Idaho. It's not surprising that Next Generation Arms, a rifle manufacturer from Oregon, was one of the takers and they moved to Hayden last year."



Left and center: Nightforce Optics  
Right: ATK's Speer Gold Dot Ammunition is the number one choice for law enforcement-giving officers reliable ammunition for the toughest situations.

Idaho's governor believes that more outdoor products manufacturers will continue to move and expand to the state as they discover the area's assets. And increasingly, these types of products will be made in Idaho.

"If you fish, hunt, hike, bike, golf, ski or pursue any number of other outdoor leisure activities," says Governor Otter, "you've used equipment that's probably designed or manufactured in Idaho." ♦

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## Marketing Consortium Gives Boats Manufacturers a Boost By Julie Howard

**T**hey call this area the “Jet Boat Capital of the World” for a good reason. The city of Lewiston sits at the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater rivers and has attracted a number of boat manufacturers.

“People can come here and build the boat of their dreams,” said Bryce Barnes, general manager of Custom Weld Boats.

Across the Snake River is the city of Clarkston, Washington. While sitting in different states, the two cities comprise one metropolitan area and boat manufacturers from both states have partnered to market their region and their products overseas.

The Snake River Boats consortium was officially launched at the 2010 Boot Dusseldorf (“boot” means “boat” in German) tradeshow, the largest marine show in Europe, attracting 240,000 attendees. Nine manufacturers from the Lewiston/Clarkston region were represented and the results encouraged the group to attend again in January 2011.

Custom Weld now is shipping boats through a distributor in Russia and was also featured along with other Snake River boat manufacturers in an article in a European publication called Skipper.

“This has been a great opportunity to promote our valley and to broaden our exporting opportunities,” said Barnes.

Bentz Boats has been shipping boats to South America to Nepal, but hasn’t yet hit the European market. That’s what attracted Bryan Bentz to the program.

“Our business is based on custom builds and the development of each boat takes time,” he said. “I had no expectation of coming back from Dusseldorf with boat orders—but what I had hoped, and what did happen, is the opportunity to make contacts and develop business relationships that over time will equate to orders.”

Exports make up the bulk of Custom Weld’s business, with its biggest market being Canada. As the recession impacted the buying power of U.S. consumers, finding new markets has become more important.

Boat builders here already export to Canada so Europe became the primary target for the new program.

“Next to Canada, Europe is a top market,” says Gary White, president of P’Chelle International, which heads the consortium’s marketing program.

The group is also getting educated in the “CE marking” requirement, which is a certification process necessary to export to Europe. The marking certifies that a product has met necessary health, safety and environmental requirements that are required to export to European countries. The consortium has brought a trainer and certifier to the Lewiston/Clarkston area in June 2011 and again in October 2011 to help manufacturers get certified before the next Boot Dusseldorf tradeshow in 2012.

The Snake River is especially known for jet boating because of its passage through Hells Canyon, North America’s deepest river gorge. The river has areas that are marked by whitewater rapids and others that are only a few inches deep. Jet boats, which have flat bottoms, can skim over the top of the water. Manufacturers here can use these varied conditions to test their designs.

“The Dusseldorf show was an opportunity to introduce our style of aluminum boats to the European market,” said Bentz. “The potential for our group is quite large.” ♦

### Members of the Snake River Boats consortium in Idaho:

Bentz Boats  
SJX Boats Inc  
Custom Weld Boats

Gateway Trailers  
Riddle Marine Inc.  
[www.snakeriverboats.com](http://www.snakeriverboats.com)

# Idaho Boats Used to Fight Drug Crime In Ecuador

By Belinda Isley

Ecuadorian government officials test out the MuscleJon in Idaho

SJX Jet Boats, Inc. is headquartered in Orofino, Idaho surrounded by beautiful mountain scenery, on the bank of the pristine Clearwater River. Four thousand miles away, tributaries of the dark, slow moving Amazon River creep between Ecuador and Columbia. These rivers had little in common until SJX owner Steve Stajkowski was contacted to build a very special boat.

Stajkowski, a boat-builder in Idaho for 25 years, said the experience of designing and building boats for the U.S. military and the Ecuadorian government to help curb drug trafficking will be one he never forgets.

"They were looking for a specific boat, and we created one to fit their needs in Ecuador," said Stajkowski.

Northern Ecuador—and its 425-mile border with Columbia—is a strategic area for the Columbian Revolutionary Armed Forces and its illicit activities, including arms and munitions trafficking, narco-terrorism, drugs, labs and precursor chemicals. The organization uses the Amazon's tributaries and its spider web of little creeks as the principal transit point for illegal activities. This area is difficult to travel and monitor with traditional boats.

Enter the SJX MuscleJon—a tactical boat created by SJX to operate in as little as 5 inches of water -- which is important when policing a vast network of shallow and debris-ridden rivers.

At final count, 24 Idaho-built MuscleJon tactical boats are now in the hands of military units working along the border to combat illegal activities.

The logistics of doing business with a client 4,000 miles away went smoothly.

"Everything I needed from the correct documentation through the Secretary of State to the shipping was all accommodated," said Stajkowski.

Stajkowski, who speaks only English, sometimes had translation hurdles, but after traveling to Quito Ecuador to meet with the Ecuadorian military and then hosting their delegates in Idaho, a great business relationship as well as friendship was forged.

"I am very certain that not one of the individuals who came to Idaho from Ecuador will ever forget the great hospitality and beauty of our wonderful area," said Stajkowski. ♦



Ecuadorian government takes delivery of boats



# Eyewear Company Focuses on Safety Niche

By Julie Howard



Sun Valley might be famous for skiing and celebrities, but this mountain resort is also well known in the eyewear industry.

The world's largest supplier of military eyewear was started here and continues to find new markets for its products. Started in 1998, Eye Safety Systems initially made protective eyewear for firefighters. Within five years, it was also receiving large contract with various branches of the military. Today, ESS has also branched into law enforcement markets as well as consumer markets for hunting and motorsports.

"We work with each arm of the military and we are now the sole provider of authorized commercial eyewear to the Marine Corps," said Steve Dondero, vice president of marketing for ESS.

ESS was also the first company to offer an updated design for eyewear used on U.S. Navy flight decks, replacing the previous product that was designed in 1945. The company continues to expand into the military markets. In early 2011, ESS won a \$6 million contract, with options to expand it to \$13.5 million, from the Department of Defense.

The company's web site has numerous testimonials from service men who credit ESS with saving their eyesight. Sgt. Ross Shores, with the 172nd Stryker Brigade, describes being caught in a sniper attack while in Iraq.

"The sniper's bullet hit my gun mount and continued on to fragment and splatter on the right lens of my ESS CDI sunglasses," Shores wrote. "While I was knocked down with the impact of the bullet, I suffered only minor injuries to my head."

The sunglasses? The ballistics-rated lenses were fractured and the frames scratched, but they clearly deflected the bullet.

"We only make safety rated products," said Dondero. "One of the things that makes us feel good about working here is that we help people who are making significant sacrifices for our country. We call them the defenders of freedom and safety."

Their products have become so universal that they have also been used in action movies such as "The Hurt Locker," "Battle Los Angeles," "The Town," and "Transformers."



The company's founder, John Dondero, was in the industry for more than 15 years before starting ESS. He previously worked for Scott USA, another global eyewear company based in Sun Valley, and JT Racing. Understanding the needs of protective eyewear has helped the company grow, with sales in 107 countries. In 2007, ESS was purchased



by Oakley, Inc., one of the largest eyewear companies in the world. ESS now operates as a subsidiary and remains in Sun Valley.

"We're always amazed at the type of human resources that can be found in this small ski town," said Dondero. "We're always flooded with very impressive resumes. We find that people often come here for the location and then they find that this is a very established company as well."

Being located in a place that offers life balance is a draw for many people.

"Employees can go for a mountain bike ride at lunch or get some (ski) powder in the morning, and still get all their work hours in for the day," said Dondero. "How great is that?" ♦



# Staying Dry in Idaho

By Mike Rotchford

Any outdoorsman will tell you, there's nothing worse than putting on a pair of cold, wet boots in the morning. Enter PEET Dryer, makers of products that dry everything from boots, gloves and helmets to your Camelback and even your gun safe.

Outdoor equipment is expensive and keeping it dry goes a long way in preserving your investment. Thoroughly drying gear eliminates odor-causing bacteria and stops the growth of mold and mildew that deteriorate materials.

"In the outdoor world, there's a problem with drying and we work with people on a regular basis that have never had an experience with dry gear," said Andy Kennelly, PEET's vice president of sales and marketing.

Since 1968, PEET Dryer has been working to change that. Located in St. Maries, PEET ships its products to more than 1,200 dealers nationwide and exports to countries in Europe and Asia.

The company has found Idaho to be an excellent location for manufacturing. "The environment, the workers, the strong work ethic... we've found no need to try and consider doing business or manufacturing someplace else."

Kennelly says the lack of restrictions on business, the low costs, and the ability to source

locally are just a few of the reasons why they enjoy being in Idaho. "We're not bringing parts in from across the country because we don't need to outsource to other states. Having local resources that I can depend on is a huge cost savings."

Idaho boasts another bonus. PEET and other outdoor product manufacturers can field test their products literally right outside the doors of their manufacturing plant instead of shipping them hundreds of miles.

Usually, the people who make the products are also the ones using them.

PEET has struck a chord with outdoorsmen, which has enabled the company to expand into new markets like fitness, power sports and the military. The company sells its products through national chains such as Cabela's, L.L. Bean and Bass Outdoor. ♦



## Tax Incentives: Why Idaho?

Idaho's incentives are designed to enhance overall profitability and make doing business as smooth as possible. The range of available options includes financial incentives, business tax credits, worker training programs and more.

Companies looking to do business in Idaho should consider:

- Any business that creates a new job can receive a refundable income tax credit for the total gross wages paid to the new employee during the first 12 months of employment. The amount of the credit is based on the business' unemployment insurance rating and the unemployment rate of the county where the job is created.
- A range of income tax credits that heavily negate Idaho's 7.6 percent corporate tax rate. Companies can earn tax credits on everything from hiring new workers, conducting research, expanding their broadband infrastructure and investing in new facilities. The best part is these credits can be carried forward up to 14 years.
- No sales tax for purchasing equipment and raw materials used in food processing, manufacturing, research, pollution control, and utilities or industrial fuels
- Idaho has the third lowest property taxes in the nation. Then again, there is a good chance that companies won't pay property tax for the first five years after start up. Since there's no statewide property tax, local counties can authorize a full or partial property tax exemption to businesses that invest a minimum of \$3 million. In addition, no business pays property tax on inventory or registered motor vehicles, vessels and aircraft.
- The state also offers customized recruiting services as well as workforce training. Financial reimbursement up to \$3,000/new employee is available to eligible companies, and Idaho's colleges and universities are well equipped to create customized training programs for any company that needs it.

There are more incentives to consider. For a complete list, go to [www.commerce.idaho.gov/business/incentives](http://www.commerce.idaho.gov/business/incentives).



# Renewables Heat Up

Idaho has a long history of using hydro-power and geothermal to provide some of the lowest energy costs in the nation. Today, the state has launched into a full portfolio of renewables, adding wind, solar and biomass.

Idaho's Legislature placed an emphasis on encouraging renewable energy in its 2007 Energy Plan. Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter then created the Office of Energy Resources and established the Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance to streamline the development of renewable resources.

The attractiveness of Idaho's business climate has drawn a number of renewable energy companies to the state. The state boasts a variety of elements that make it a viable laboratory and manufacturing center for companies focused on the renewables industry.

Two of those elements include the Idaho National Laboratory along with the state's universities that each has strong programs in renewable energy. Research areas include wind technologies, fuel cells, low-power batteries, electric car technologies, kinetic energy capture, biomass, and new alternative fuels. In addition, the state ranks tops in patents per capita in the nation, speaking to the engineering and entrepreneurial talent working there.

"We have unique resources in Idaho with abundant geothermal, wind, solar and biomass," said Governor Otter, whose office sits in America's only state capitol building heated by geothermal energy. "In addition to the raw materials, we also have a good business climate for companies interested in manufacturing components for this industry."

A number of companies are finding success in supporting Idaho's renewable industry by supplying parts and services. These companies do everything from making diamond wires to slice carbon for solar energy cells to providing specialized legal services to the industry.

The state also has one of the country's highest concentrations of "green jobs" and one of the highest potentials for those jobs as well, according to a 2011 report issued by the Idaho Department of Labor. The report was based on the assessment of green jobs in Idaho in 2010.

"Idaho is an appealing location for renewable energy companies," added Idaho Department of Commerce Director Donald Dietrich. "We have a stable government with a balanced budget and an infrastructure that supports this industry."

Read expanded coverage about Idaho's renewable energy sector in a special Idaho Business publication at <http://www.commerce.idaho.gov/business/publications/> ♦

## October 23-25, 2011

Come to Boise for the 11th annual Harvesting Clean Energy Conference—the Northwest's premiere gathering of the agriculture and energy industries to advance rural economic development through clean energy.

Drawing on top-notch presenters with real-world experience getting successful projects built, this year's power-packed agenda will focus on the practical steps, helping you understand:

- Where are your best opportunities in renewable energy, biomass and biofuels, or upgrading to energy efficient equipment?
- What financing, technical expertise, and partners are available to help?

Farmers, ranchers and other private individuals can register early for just \$90, professionals for \$160.

For information, go to <http://harvestcleanenergy.org/conference>.

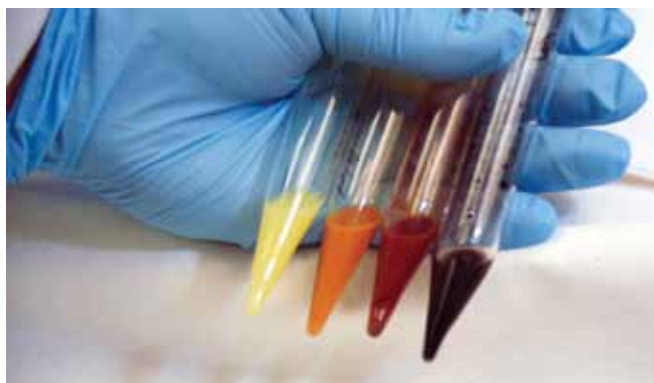
# SOLAR Shines Bright

By Julie Howard

Solar R&D and manufacturing have been attracted to Idaho's low-cost environment. In 2011, finishing touches were put on Hoku Material's \$400 million polysilicon manufacturing plant in Pocatello.

The sprawling new facility is just one of Idaho's growing success stories in the solar industry. The manufacturing plant will have 250 full time employees when at full throttle. Across the state to the west is another new solar manufacturing facility, Transform Solar, which is a co-venture by Micron Technology and Origin Energy that will hire hundreds.

Beyond the large manufacturers are dozens of newcomers to the business. Boise-based Inovus, which has designed a flexible solar panel that wraps around utility poles, is one of the fastest-growing businesses (in terms of revenue) in the state. To the far north is Solar Roadways, a company that has captured media attention around the world for its creative and audacious idea of turning the nation's roadways into a solar-collecting electrical grid.

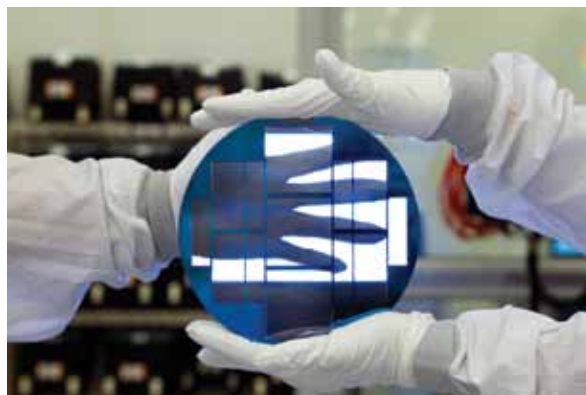


INL chemist Bob Fox and colleagues at Idaho State University have invented a way to make extremely precise, uniform nanoparticles to order, which could help make solar cells more efficient.

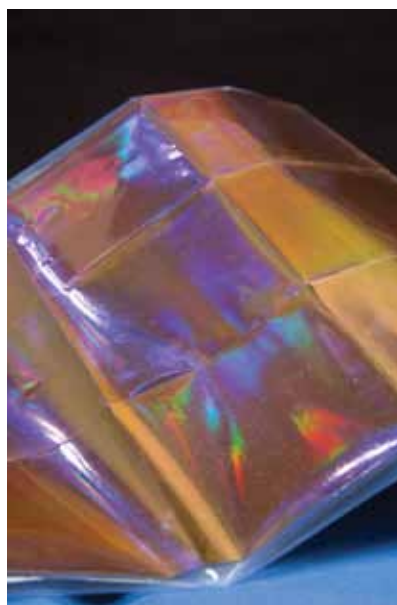
The promise of solar energy is stronger than ever, both in terms of usage and profits.

Fascinating future technologies in capturing and using solar energy are in various stages of research and development in Idaho. At the Idaho National Laboratory, a Department of Energy facility, scientists have two solar projects underway.

One project involves harnessing infrared radiation to produce a solar cell that will work even at night. INL scientists are using nano-



Transform Solar is developing SLIVER technology at its Boise and Nampa sites. SLIVER offers superior tolerance to partial shading caused by common obstructions found on rooftops.



INL has created a plastic sheet of nanoantenna arrays, created by embossing the antenna structure and depositing a conductive metal in the pattern. Each square contains roughly 260 million antennas.

antennae that are grafted onto the surface of photovoltaic solar panels. That means the panels could

be able to capture the energy of electromagnetic radiation – and not just the portion of visible light that contemporary solar cells use.

The other INL project currently underway is developing ways semiconducting nanoparticles can be used in solar cells. The breakthrough technology, which makes solar cells more efficient, was named one of the top 100 innovations of 2009 by R&D magazine. The technology, created by an INL chemist and two researchers from Idaho State University, has now been licensed to a company called Precision Nanoparticles Inc. ♦





Wind farm outside Twin Falls

## WIND Soars to New Heights

Wind has developed rapidly in the state and 2010 was a big year for new projects.

Exergy and GE Corp. completed the largest wind project in Idaho, with 122 turbines installed between Hagerman and Burley. The project generates 183 megawatts and Exergy has another 196 megawatts of wind projects set to be installed at other Idaho locations. Exergy also is working on a new turbine design that is expected to be released in 2012.

Boise has good logistics as a headquarters for a national company, said James Carkulis, Exergy's CEO and president. He moved Exergy to Idaho in 2004 because of the ease of access from Boise to other U.S. locations.

"The airport here is very easy to get in and out of," he said. "Beyond that, Idaho overall has a very good business environment. There's a good work ethic here, and there are good quality firms here that we can do business with."

Ridgeline Energy, LLC, developed Idaho's first large-scale wind farm, the 65-megawatt

Wolverine Creek wind farm near Idaho Falls. The project, which came on line in December 2005, was sold to Invenergy Wind LLC.

Ridgeline Energy and BP Wind Energy launched 83 wind turbine generators on an 11,000-acre site near Idaho Falls in 2010. The power from the Goshen North Wind Farm, generating enough electricity for more than 37,000 average American homes annually, has been sold under a long-term power purchase agreement to Southern California Edison.

Several new projects have been approved for the near future. A California developer has plans for six wind projects near Mountain Home, generating a total of 303,648 megawatt hours annually.

A green light has also been given to Meridian, Idaho-based Idaho Winds LLC, which has plans for a 21-megawatt Sawtooth Wind project near Glenns Ferry. An 80-megawatt Rockland Wind Project is expected to be online by the end of 2011. ♦

# GEOTHERMAL Heats Up



US Geothermal Raft River Plant, well testing and drill rig at Neal Hot Springs

Idaho's potential 855 megawatts of marketable, reasonably priced geothermal power ranks it third in the nation, according to the Western Governors Association.

The abundant geothermal reserves have played a role in the state's unique history with renewable energy. Boise has the oldest geothermal system in the nation, still in operation after its start in 1892. The system not only heats hundreds of homes and offices in the downtown core, it also heats the State Capitol.

Boise-based U.S. Geothermal has not only developed the Raft River geothermal power plant in southeast Idaho but has two other projects underway in Nevada and Oregon. Upon completion of these two additional projects—at San Emidio, Nev. and Neal Hot Springs in Oregon—the company will have three operating projects with a total of 62 gross installed generation capacity, resulting in 45 megawatts of net generation capacity.

The company also holds geothermal energy rights to 69,500 acres comprising six advanced state geothermal development projects.

In addition to Raft River, a number of Idaho sites are thought to be capable of developing geothermal power generation, including the Crane Creek area near Weiser in southwestern

Idaho, and Roystone Hot Springs near Sweet and Magic Reservoir near Hailey in Central Idaho.

Thermal springs and geothermal resources in Bannock, Blaine, Camas, Lemhi, Owyhee and Valley counties also could provide development opportunities given sufficient exploration, experts say. While exploration and development of geothermal power are expensive, actual operational costs are among the lowest of all power sources.

The use of geothermal resources goes beyond power generation. Secondary businesses such as greenhouse operations and aquaculture are finding that geothermal energy can lead to flourishing profits.

Sweet Valley Organics near Emmett operates a 3,000-square-foot greenhouse that is heated by geothermal waters. The business supplies nearby restaurants with tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, and other produce. Business has gone so well that the greenhouse operation will be doubled in 2011 with future expansions planned.

Fish Processors of Idaho uses its eight artesian geothermal wells that produce 4,000 gallons a minute to raise warm-water fish such as tilapia and tropical varieties. The fish are raised in the waters that stay at a steady 90-95 degrees year-round. ♦

# Bio Energy Technologies

## Looks to wood slash, leaves ... and garbage

**I**n its vast forested regions to its sprawling farm acreages, Idaho's diverse geography enjoys a virtually endless array of wood materials, grain stocks and other biomass residues that can be converted into relatively inexpensive renewable heat and energy.

Several Idaho counties are participating in the Woody Biomass Utilization Partnership to encourage the wood industry to re-establish itself in Southwest Idaho—this time using wood products for bio energy.

The partnership hopes to produce bio energy and a full range of bio-based products, including lumber, composites, paper and pulp, from second growth in the Payette and Boise national forests.

In late 2010, the Idaho Public Utilities Commission approved a 15-year electricity purchase agreement between Idaho Power and Yellowstone Power, Inc., which is developing a \$28.5 million biomass cogeneration plant at the new \$11.5 million Emerald Forest Products sawmill in Emmett that will produce 11.7 megawatts in heat and power.

Wood products aren't the only biomass potential in the state.

The Idaho National Laboratory is one of five U.S. Department of Energy sites devoting significant resources to making "bio energy" technology as risk-free as possible to help ensure its commercial marketability and reduce the nation's dependence on foreign petroleum imports. INL researchers are concentrating on moving herbaceous materials like grasses and wood "slash" from outdoor fields to processing sites.

Because Idaho is a large agricultural state, the biotechnology potential is significant, and wheat and barley crops are drawing the attention of biotech companies interested in their ethanol attributes and very stable yields. Companies are not looking at the food-based parts of the wheat, barley and corn that would be used for biomass, but their remaining stalks, stems and leaves.



Inside a Dynamis Energy gasification plant

Utilizing waste materials for bio energy is the target of an Eagle, Idaho company, that processes garbage into steam and electricity.

Dynamis Energy has engineered a \$40 million gasification plant designed to convert 250 tons of garbage unloaded daily at a southern Idaho landfill into electricity. The company in mid-2011 signed an agreement to build a plant in Lombardy, Italy with operations expected to begin in mid-2012. The plant will generate electricity as well as provide heat for a sludge drying operation. ♦



# Idaho Exports Have Record Year By Emily Bixby



Micron Semiconductor



Jackleg miners working underground at Hecla's Lucky Friday Silver Mine

Idaho's exports reached a record high of \$5.15 billion in 2010, rising 32 percent over the previous year and outstripping the national rate of 21 percent.

The state showed significant growth in sectors ranging from mining and medical instruments to semiconductors and dairy products.

Nearly half of the value of the state's exports is from semiconductors and electric machinery. The value of this category was \$2.39 billion in 2010, rising more than 18 percent from the previous year. Other industrial goods—from machinery used for nuclear reactors to medical instrumentss—were valued at more than \$587 million, with all categories rising in value.

Some of the highest growth rates were seen in transportation equipment such as aircraft materials, railway stock and traffic signal equipment. Aircraft and spacecraft materials alone grew by 2,132 percent.

Idaho has an abundance of natural resources and, in 2010, mining products grew by 52 percent. This growth was fueled largely by an increase in exports of mineral fuels and base metals. Exports of wood products and building materials rose by 117 percent, reflecting sales

of \$160 million. Exports of live trees, plants, bulbs and cut flowers rose by 67 percent.

Idaho has always been a large agriculture state, and is one of the largest cheese and dairy product producers in the nation. In 2010, the state saw a 12.5 percent increase in exports of food and agriculture products, and a 47.7 percent increase in dairy products alone. An impressive 286 percent increase was seen in cereals and sugars, and sugar confectionary grew by nearly 90 percent. The beverage industry grew by 74 percent in the sale of spirits. Idaho is also a large ranching state, and the export of live animals and their products saw a combined increase of 40 percent.

Idaho works hard to keep its business climate successful by striving to increase its exports. Increases in exports help fuel job creation and spending in the private sector.

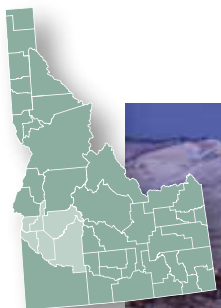
The Project 60 initiative, launched by Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter, was implemented to increase Idaho's Gross Domestic Product to \$60 billion through systemic growth, bringing new companies and businesses to Idaho, and fostering Idaho's trade and export opportunities. ♦

Information on Project 60 is at [www.project60.idaho.gov](http://www.project60.idaho.gov).

Idaho also has several EB-5 centers that foster international investment opportunities.

Information on this program is at <http://commerce.idaho.gov/investments/eb-5-regional-center/>.

project 60  
IDaho



# BOISE and the Treasure Valley

By Emily Bixby



Boise is not only the capital city and political center of the state, it is also the heart of the Treasure Valley in southwestern Idaho. Combining a vibrant urban culture and easy access to outdoor recreation, Boise and the Treasure Valley attract more businesses and residents each year. The metropolitan area attracts large businesses with its small-town feel and stable work force. The Treasure Valley is home to a number of high-tech firms such as Micron Technology, Hewlett-Packard and Microsoft.

A large draw for businesses to the Boise area is the young, loyal, and educated work force. The Treasure Valley not only includes Boise, but also the neighboring cities and communities of Meridian, Nampa, Eagle, Emmett, Parma, Caldwell, Garden City and Star. In Parma, seed company Nunhems USA is producing more eco-friendly and appealing fruits and vegetables that are also better for the environment. Cheese producer Sorrento Lactalis not only has large plant and distribution center, they also support the community and the environment by funding

a \$6.5 million state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility in Nampa.

Along with corporate presence, Boise and the Treasure Valley also have a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Idaho has ranked first in the nation for concentration of patents for a number of years. With a patent ratio that is 3.5 times the national average, Boise's start-up culture is encouraged and supported within the community. Hometown success Keynetics, Inc. chose Boise because of its "eclectic mix of businesses, people, art, history, food, and flair," according to the company website. "Boise has been nationally recognized, many times over, for being one of the best places to live, work, and play."

A dynamic arts community and nearly three dozen nearby wineries not only contribute to the economy of the Treasure Valley, but also to the vibrant culture and lifestyle. Great local restaurants are easy to find, and outdoor recreation such as zip line company Zip Idaho, encourage Treasure Valley residents to get out and enjoy their beautiful surroundings. ♦



# POCATELLO / IDAHO FALLS



Idaho Falls and Pocatello are only 50 miles apart on Interstate 15, but these two hubs in Eastern Idaho boast distinct individual successes and prosperous communities. Both of these cities are home to several large employers ranging in fields from renewable energy and supercomputing, to higher education. Eastern Idaho has one of the highest per-capita concentrations of PhDs in the nation, giving life to Idaho State University, BYU-Idaho, Eastern Idaho Technical College, and the University of Idaho's Eastern Idaho satellite campus.

In Pocatello, the Hoku Corporation in 2011 opened a new plant that manufactures polysilicon for the solar industry. Eastern Idaho has become a hub of renewable energy for the state, with a number of wind farms dotting hills above farm land.

Idaho Falls company North Wind specializes in environmental engineering and construction services. In 2010, North Wind hired 96 new employees to accommodate business

demand. Idaho Falls is also home to the Idaho National Laboratory, which is one of the state's largest employers. In May, the Idaho National Laboratory installed a new 12,512-processor supercomputer named 'Fission'. The INL plans to use Fission to simulate what happens to the metal cladding that surrounds uranium fuel in a nuclear reactor. French nuclear firm Areva is also building a state-of-the-art uranium enrichment facility just west of Idaho Falls.

Tourism and outdoor recreation are mainstays of Eastern Idaho's economy, with nearby Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park. Continued community improvement is visible in the Portneuf Medical Center's brand new hospital in Pocatello, which created over 400 jobs during construction and offers private rooms for all patients. Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center in Idaho Falls recently opened a new 24,000 square-foot NICU wing that is the only NICU facility in the region. ♦







## TWIN FALLS and the Magic Valley

By Emily Bixby



South Central Idaho is cut in half by the Snake River Canyon, but that doesn't stop Twin Falls and the Magic Valley area from being regarded as the heartland of Idaho. The business diversity in this area is wide, from the nation's largest producer of freshwater trout in Hagerman, to the world-famous Sun Valley Resort.

The Magic Valley is one of the largest food providers and distribution areas in the state. The fertile volcanic soil in this region and the Snake River Plain Aquifer provide ideal conditions in which to grow a variety of crops. Large fields and dairies link small towns like Filer, Buhl, Gooding and Jerome. The area is a powerhouse of agriculture and business, attracting companies such as Darigold, Seneca Foods and Lamb Weston Con Agra. However, the close-knit communities still allow for hometown

businesses such as Cloverleaf Creamery in Buhl to be successful. With all these dairies in the Magic Valley, it's easy to see why Idaho is the 3rd largest producer of dairy products in the nation. The College of Southern Idaho is located in Twin Falls and provides customized workforce training programs for local businesses in a number of areas. CSI also offers a popular wind energy program

that trains wind turbine technicians for this highly expanding field. The skilled and dedicated workforce of the Magic Valley has drawn in advanced manufacturing companies such as Hilex Poly and Jayco. North of Twin Falls, the neighboring towns of Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley are located at the south end of Idaho's Sawtooth Mountains. The Sun Valley Resort celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 2011 and opened a brand new, 58,756-square-foot clubhouse on the TrailCreek Golf Course.

From Sun Valley to Twin Falls, recreation and outdoor activities are easy to find. Recreationalists can choose among world class skiing and golfing in Sun Valley and Ketchum, to BASE jumping off the Perrine Bridge in Twin Falls. ♦

IMAGES: JOSHUA ROPER



## MOSCOW/ LEWISTON



North Central Idaho is a region that includes lush forests, crystal-clear rivers and rolling hills of wheat, barley and lentils. As the two largest cities in the region, Moscow and Lewiston play a pivotal role in North Central Idaho's economy. Moscow and Lewiston hug the Washington border, but both are important assets to Idaho.

Lewiston's commerce revolves around the convergence of the Clearwater and Snake rivers, and Lewiston is the most inland port in the Northwest. In addition to the city's large employers like Clearwater Paper, Lewiston is home to Lewis-

PORT: BELINDA ISLEY

Clark State College. With the help of the Clearwater Economic Development Association, LCSC's Workforce Training program received a \$200,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. This grant will help develop a model for workforce training for rural manufacturers. Activities such as curriculum development, software purchase training and online modular training development will reach far beyond just Lewis-Clark State College and Lewiston. The consortium consists of the Clearwater Economic Development Association, LCSC Workforce Training, Tech Prep and Technical & Industrial Division, the University of Idaho, Northwest Intermountain Manufacturers Association, Valley Vision, and school districts in Orofino, Nez Perce, Lewiston, Moscow, Kamiah and Cottonwood.

Just 30 miles up the hill from Lewiston, Moscow sits in the middle of the Palouse.

Surrounded by rolling fields, Moscow is home to the University of Idaho. The university is one of Moscow's largest employers, and brings in technology and biotech companies to Moscow with its engineering support. This year, researchers at the University of Idaho received a grant from the USDA to help determine the optimum configuration of a regional livestock food system for small producers, including production, transportation, processing, and marketing and sales.

Moscow is a large supporter of small businesses and the arts, being named one of the "Best 100 Small Art Towns in America." ♦



## NORTHERN IDAHO Coeur d'Alene- Bonners Ferry



Idaho's Panhandle has a deeply rooted history in forestry and mining. With a worldwide resurgence in precious metals, the state's mining industry has also undergone new growth.

The historic Silver Valley still has a robust mining industry and also offers tours for those interested in mines from an earlier era. Numerous golf courses, museums and ski resorts attract visitors every year to the beautiful area. Nearby Kellogg has several options for biking enthusiasts, including downhill mountain biking at the Silver Mountain Resort, Route of the Hiawatha and the 73-mile long Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes.

Farther north is the burgeoning community of Sandpoint, which has had an influx of new residents over the past decade. The business community is anchored by the worldwide headquarters of clothing firm Coldwater Creek. The community is supportive of other business ventures, providing training on various business topics for members of

the local Chamber of Commerce. In addition, Sandpoint holds a Business Showcase that brings businesses and consumers together under one roof.

Coeur d'Alene is the largest city in the region and has a diverse economy, from natural resources to manufacturing to tourism. The Coeur d'Alene Resort, which sits at the edge of the breathtaking Lake Coeur d'Alene, draws visitors every year to golf and relax, has been ranked as one of the 'Top 10 Resorts' in the nation.

The city also draws large corporate businesses such as Verizon Communications. The company has three order processing centers and two Center Partners call centers that provide customer service for telecommunications companies.

The communities of Northern Idaho are known for their pristine lake and lush forests. St. Maries, Bonners Ferry, Post Falls, Priest Falls and numerous other towns lure visitors and businesses because of their small-town charms and unique assets. ♦



**Emily Bixby** attends the University of Idaho in Moscow, majoring in Communication Studies with a minor in Public Relations. When not boating, skiing and going to UI sporting events, she lives in Boise.

# Business Assistance Programs

## Provide Critical Help

By Gloria Mabbutt



The Green House, a business incubator in downtown Boise

Idaho has a network of public, private and non-profit organizations committed to working with new and existing businesses. Companies can get everything from marketing research to low-cost rent from various organizations throughout the state.

### INCUBATORS

Incubators are facilities that typically provide shared space, affordable rent and a nurturing environment. As the name implies, incubators are meant to hatch new businesses into the community through specialized services, shared equipment and staff.

A 2008 study by the U.S. Economic Development Administration showed business incubators created between 46.3 and 69.4 local jobs per \$10,000 of federal investment for a federal cost per job of between \$144 and \$216; more than the construction of commercial structures, road and transportation projects, and industrial park and community infrastructure combined.

Incubators in Idaho offer a multitude of services for start-ups and existing companies. Many have evolved over time and forged new

partnerships and offered new services to be more effective. For more information, on incubator services and other resources go to <http://www.commerce.idaho.gov/business/business-development>. The "Starting a Business in Idaho" is also an excellent source of information available through the Department of Commerce or available at <http://commerce.idaho.gov/business/publications/>.

### Examples of Idaho's successful incubators:

**The Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Center** provides a supportive entrepreneurial environment to stimulate business and encourage job creation in Lemhi County and the region.

The center provides modestly priced office and light manufacturing space, flexible leases, shared support services, i.e. business counseling, seminars, and video conferencing. For more information go to <http://www.svbic.com/About>.

**The University of Idaho Business Technology Incubator** in Moscow promotes technology transfer and small business development in Moscow, Latah County and the State of Idaho. In addition to affordable facilities and quality services,



partnerships between tenant companies, university faculty, researchers, engineers, and scientists, provides a quality learning environment with formal training, practical application and networking. Visit their website at <http://www.uro.uidaho.edu/bti>.

**The Technology and Entrepreneurial Center (TECenter)** is dedicated to the development, growth and success of technology companies. Located on Boise State University's West Campus, the TECenter offers pre-incubation, start-up, and growth stage and marketing expertise, networks and tools they need to succeed. Go to <http://www.bsutecenter.com>.

**The WaterCooler** opened its doors in downtown Boise in May 2008. The WaterCooler's focus is on innovation and technology companies and the development of their ideas to create products or services into a new business. The availability of affordable space and equipment allow these companies to work on their ideas through events and activities through formal and informal networks. <http://www.watercoolerboise.com>.

**The Green House** opened in 2010 in Boise. This facility supports established alternative energy businesses that are past the "idea stage" but young enough to benefit from incubation services to get off the ground. Those services include e-commerce, legal issues and marketing. The Green House is a partnership between the City of Boise and the Idaho Small Business Development Centers. More detail at: <http://www.boisegreenhouse.com>.

### SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Idaho SBDCs serve Idaho's 44 counties with offices in six regions. Funded by the Small Business Administration SBDC's have strong partnerships with colleges and universities with opportunities for faculty and students to work with consultants and business owners. Over a period of 25 years, 68 percent of SBDC's clients were existing businesses and 32 percent were startups.

Statistics show that the 27,700 businesses served have achieved greater than 10 times the sales and employment growth of the typical Idaho small business. One reason is the

program customizes one-on-one consulting to meet individual business needs. Qualified coaches provide this service at no cost while maintaining the confidentiality businesses need. High impact training is available and affordable. For every \$1 invested in the program, \$4 has returned to the economy as a result of business client successes. See SBDCs full range of services at <http://www.idahosbdc.org>.

### OTHER BUSINESS SERVICES

**TechHelp** has offices in Boise and Pocatello and provides technical and professional assistance to Idaho manufacturers, processors and inventors to strengthen their global competitiveness through continuous product and process innovation. TechHelp is a partnership of Idaho's three state universities and an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership. It is also Idaho's Economic Development Administration University Center, targeting economically distressed areas of Idaho. See their website at <http://www.techhelp.org>.

**TechConnect** is located in five regions of the state and helps companies with everything from market assessment to obtaining financing. The organization's focus is to turn an idea into a product or service and get it to market to produce revenue.

TechConnect is actively engaged in collaborations with other businesses, economic development organizations, universities, the Idaho National Lab, entrepreneurs, angel groups and venture capital professionals. More information is available at <http://www.idahotechconnect.com>.

**The Idaho Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)** helps Idaho businesses compete for government contracts on goods and services. The opportunity for Idaho companies to access this huge market is great since most of the federal purchases are designated for small businesses. The Idaho PTAC has been successful in helping Idaho businesses secure over \$500 million in awards. See details at <http://commerce.idaho.gov/business/business-development/government-contracting>. ♦



# Looking for thrills... or peaceful wilderness, pick your own adventure in Idaho

By Julie Hahn

Sure, Idaho has a lot to offer. From the dense, green forests and golden hills of the north to the moonlike volcanic fields and deep canyons of the south, Idaho certainly fits the old cliché — there really is something for everyone. But there must be something that keeps people coming back, something beyond the fantastic scenery and excellent recreation opportunities.

And come back they do: Idaho's tourism industry, long a stronghold of the state's economy, is still booming. In 2010 alone, the industry brought in more than \$359 million, part of a 28 percent growth rate over the past 10 years.

"Tourism is extremely important to the state of Idaho," says Kellie Kluksdal of the state's tourism division. "It's the third-largest industry in the state and employs 57,000 people. It's an economic driver."



So what is it about Idaho that has attracted visitors from across the globe and inspired writers from Ernest Hemingway to Anthony Doerr? What moves people to seek out places like Bruneau Dunes State Park or the wilds of Hells Canyon?

**Maybe it's the water.** From the pristine, tranquil waters at Jerry Johnson Hot Springs to the roiling,



breathtaking Staircase Rapids on the Payette River, Idaho has long attracted people searching for an experience that can't be found anywhere else.

More than 30 years ago, Peter Grubb was a rafting guide in West Virginia who heard stories of river adventures in Idaho. "I heard Idaho was the place to be and had the absolute best wilderness river trips," he said. He moved west and started ROW Adventures in 1979, which has since grown to one of the premier river companies in the state.

Grubb's guests come from around the world to experience half- and full-day trips as well as three- to six-day adventures. "People today are looking for an authentic experience that allows them to explore their own boundaries," he says. "We believe that people are looking for more than just 'splash and giggles,' and we train our guides in natural and cultural history interpretation—meaning a way of telling stories that connects our guests with the river and resource in a way that is personally meaningful and relevant."

It's tough to shake the whitewater bug once it has taken hold, as many a visitor has discovered. With more than 3,000 miles of whitewater

IMAGES: JOSHUA ROPER



**Joshua Roper** specializes in advertising, editorial, travel, and environmental photography. His images have enhanced the messaging of Fortune 500 companies, elite travel magazines and publications such as *The New York Times*, *US Airways*, and *Via*. Joshua is available for location shoots anywhere on the globe and can be reached at: [Joshua@joshuaroperphotography.com](mailto:Joshua@joshuaroperphotography.com).

—more than anywhere in the lower 48—Idaho offers plenty of ways to experience the gut-wrenching thrills of running a world-class rapid or spend a sunny day jetboating. The Idaho Whitewater Trail ([www.idahowhitewatertrail.com](http://www.idahowhitewatertrail.com)) showcases seven spectacular day trips, from jaw-dropping canyon runs to family-friendly experiences.

**Maybe it's something in the air.** Sun Valley has been attracting Hollywood stars and locals since the 1930s with its legendary setting and cozy village, but recently newer stars are shining bright. Powder hounds can find more than 300 inches of snow at Schweitzer Mountain Resort, famed for its view of Lake Pend Oreille and the surrounding Selkirk Range, or step into the world's longest single-stage gondola at Silver Mountain. Boiseans have long been partial to their “backyard” ski resort, Bogus Basin, a mere 16 miles north of the city, which includes not only skiing and snowboarding but a tubing hill with an 800-foot drop. Destination seekers can find thrills at Tamarack, Idaho's newest ski resort, in central Idaho.

**Maybe it's the wildlife.** Long after Hemingway whiled away afternoons fly fishing at the legendary Silver Creek, Idaho continues to attract people seeking out its abundant hunting, fishing, and observation opportunities.

Many of the best wildlife experiences happen to be located within Idaho's 30 state parks and national monuments and recreation areas. The Henry's Fork of the Snake River, located in Harriman State Park, is famous for its fly fishing, while you might see a magnificent elk or bighorn sheep in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Area.

For a glimpse of what Idaho's wildlife used to be like, curious visitors can check out the Hagerman Fossil Bed National Monument—one of the richest fossil deposits of the Pliocene Epoch of 3.5 million years ago.

**Maybe it's the attitude.** Wherever visitors in Idaho choose to go, they often remark on a quality that's hard to define: a certain attitude that comes from living and playing in one of the most spectacular settings in the United States.

Jeff Naylor of the Teton Springs Lodge and Spa in Victor says that visitors to the lodge—wherever they are from—usually have the same comment: “It's just so peaceful here.” Add that tranquility to a place that's off the beaten path and you have the perfect combination for an amazing vacation.

“What we're finding is that our guests want a genuine experience and the chance to enjoy the great outdoors with family and friends,” Naylor says. “They also appreciate a friendly and knowledgeable staff and quality accommodations in a beautiful environment. There's hiking, biking, fly fishing, swimming and world-class golf available on site and horseback riding, white water rafting, hot air ballooning and more just minutes away. Our guests truly appreciate the diversity this area affords and also how relaxed they feel at the end of their stay.” ♦



**Julie Hahn** is a writer and longtime Idahoan who lives and works in the Treasure Valley. When she isn't writing, she can be found exploring the West with her husband or tending to their menagerie in Boise's North End.





## Grapes+Climate+Soil Equals Award-Winning Wines

By Julie Hahn

Gregg Alger grew up in Meridian, Idaho, but it wasn't until he went on an extended road trip that he had an epiphany about his own backyard. As he was looking out over the beautiful vistas and rich soil of California wine country, he turned to his wife and said, "Why couldn't we do this in Idaho?"

Less than five years after that trip, the Algerts' Huston Vineyards in Eagle is Idaho's newest winery—and it turns out a lot of people are asking themselves the same question the Algerts posed to themselves. Idaho has long been home to grape growers (the crop was first grown in northern Idaho in the 1860s), but the state's winemaking industry has boomed over the last five years as more people have discovered that Idaho's volcanic soil, hot summer days and cool nights are fantastic for growing grapes. And as Idaho's wineries have grown, so has interest in experiencing one of the West's best-kept secrets.

Idaho now boasts 43 wineries, most of which are just a short drive from the state's population hub of Ada County, but growing regions can be found as far north as Lewiston. In 2007, the state received its first-ever American Viticulture Area designation, or AVA. The Snake River AVA has been key to putting the state on the map as a winery destination, says Moya Shatz, director of the Idaho Wine Commission. People may be

drawn to Idaho wines because of the designation, she says, but they buy because Idaho's wineries offer a down-to-earth experience.

"People are looking for something new—it's exciting, and we have great wines," Shatz says. "People really like the culture. When you go to a winery here, you're talking to the winemaker. It's not pretentious, and it's affordable."

That approachability has served winemakers well as they have worked with their local communities to bring attention to their products. The Sunny Slope growing area, where the Snake River meanders through rolling hillside orchards, is now home to guided wine outings and easy-to-follow guides for visitors who want to sample Shiraz and Viognier at their own pace.

Idaho's wineries have also benefitted from the intense interest in eating and shopping locally. Restaurants such as Bittercreek and Red Feather in Boise have given Idaho wines a prominent place on their menus alongside food raised by local growers and producers, while farmers' markets from Moscow to Twin Falls have done their part to raise awareness of what the state's wineries have to offer.

"There is a tremendous amount of excitement and enthusiasm," Alger says. "It's fresh and it's lively right now. We're starting to be discovered—it's a fascinating industry, and it's one of the shining stars. It's booming. ♦"

More information:

Idaho Wine Commission: [www.idahowines.org](http://www.idahowines.org)

Idaho Winery Tours: <http://www.idahowinerytours.com/>



# Bicycling Something for Everyone

By Julie Hahn

Idaho is a great place for a once-in-a-lifetime adventure—rafting one of the West’s magnificent rivers or skiing down a world-famous mountain run. But the locals will let you in on a little secret: They pack in adventure every day by taking advantage of Idaho’s extensive bike trails.

“In Boise and the Valley we have some great outdoor assets,” says Mike Cooley of George’s Cycles in Boise. “We have well over 100 miles of trails within 10 minutes of town.”

In 2010, Boise was rated the #1 Best Adventure Town by *Outside Magazine*—and for good reason: The city boasts some of the best access to thrills in the state. The Ridge to Rivers Trail System extends throughout the Foothills of Boise, linking public and private land through 130 miles of trails that range from kid-friendly jaunts to heart-pounding climbs. It’s not unusual to find mountain bikers heading to the hills during their lunch break, or taking advantage of the extra hours of summer daylight for a long ride after work.

If a scenic stroll on a cruiser is more your style, Boiseans will direct you to one of the city’s great joys—the Boise River Greenbelt. This 22-mile paved trail follows the curves of the Boise River and is used year-round by bike commuters, families, and pedestrians and cyclists who just want to enjoy the view. Like many Idaho towns, Boise has spent years identifying, establishing and preserving its best natural assets. The community has worked diligently on the Greenbelt, which was born out of a desire in the 1960s to repair the then-polluted banks of the Boise River. Forty years later, anglers fly fish in the water while cyclists enjoy the shade of the river’s banks.

In Pocatello, a series of trails throughout the Portneuf Valley offer everything from technical riding to easy mountain biking. Trails such as Corral Creek, City Creek, Kinport Mountain, Trail Creek and more, offer hilly vistas and views of one of Idaho’s largest college towns.





Cooley says Idaho towns that have looked outside the box have prospered in recent years. Last year, Cooley and other biking enthusiasts worked with Cascade, a town with some of the best scenery and mountain roads in the state, organize a bike ride. About 550 people signed up for that first ride, raising about \$25,000 for Cascade.

“McCall, Cascade, Tamarack—all of these places are golden” for bike riding, Cooley says.

Cycling supporters are creating their own challenges to elevate the sport within the state and the West. In Eagle, just a short drive away from Boise, racing enthusiasts are building the Idaho Velodrome and Cycling Park. When completed, this park will offer a 33-foot velodrome (one of the largest in the West) and courses for racing, ensuring that Idaho remains a cycling destination for everyone from the commuter to the hardcore racer.

Idaho is ideal for people who want to bring a bit of the outdoors to their everyday routing. Bike commuters can find a year-round haven in towns throughout Idaho, as Robin Woods of Alturas Analytics in Moscow has.

“I ride my bike to work as often as I can,” Woods says. “A lot of people commute to work on their bikes — Moscow is a big biking town.”

Woods’ commute stretches along the Latah Trail, which uses the historic Moscow-Arrow Railroad Corridor as its path. This 16-mile stretch

of road connects the cities of Troy and Moscow while preserving part of the area’s rail history. It’s the perfect way to experience an Idaho morning, Woods says.

“You get up, you get out, the sun hits you and awakens you and invigorates your senses for the day,” she says. ♦

### Idaho Cycling Enthusiasts:

[www.idahocycling.com/](http://www.idahocycling.com/).

### List of rides throughout Idaho.

### Idaho Bike Racing:

[www.idahobikeracing.org/](http://www.idahobikeracing.org/)

### Ride Idaho:

[www.rideidaho.org/](http://www.rideidaho.org/) (bike tours)

### Cycle Idaho:

[www.cycleidaho.com/](http://www.cycleidaho.com/)

### Eagle Bike Park:

[www.eaglebikepark.org/](http://www.eaglebikepark.org/)


### Treasure Valley Cycling Alliance:

[www.biketreasurevalley.org/](http://www.biketreasurevalley.org/)

### Southwest Idaho Mountain Biking Association:

[www.swimba.org/](http://www.swimba.org/)





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